

# **Determination of the Alkaline Phosphatase activity as a tool to characterize cheeses made from pasteurized cow milk**

## **Prospects for the establishment of an EU regulatory threshold for cow-milk pasteurized cheese**

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A project to investigate whether it is possible to establish an acceptable limit for the Alkaline Phosphatase (AP) content in pasteurised cow milk cheeses, within EU, is currently monitored by the EU Reference Laboratory for Milk and milk products, upon request of the Health and Consumer Protection General Directorate.

It is deemed important to collect data on AP content, within EU Member States, in different types of cheese made from pasteurised cow milk and from cow milk having undergone heat treatments milder than pasteurisation (thermisation) or mechanical treatments (microfiltration), and produced under different technologies and processes.

Data will be collected from both pilot and industrial plants operating under well-defined conditions in regard to the heat or physical treatment of the cow milk processed to cheese, and also from cow milk cheeses commercially available.

The project is also expected to provide evidence of a clear distinction (no overlapping) between cheese from pasteurised milk and from milk having undergone milder heat treatments or mechanical treatments, when such manufacturing options exist.

Because cheese products are submitted to trade and undergo, among others, analytical controls related to export and import regulations, a similar project broadened to the international level is also underway.

Study cases will be presented to illustrate the topic and evaluate in a preliminary way the pertinence of the approach developed.